

The copy filmed here has been reproduced thanks to the generosity of:

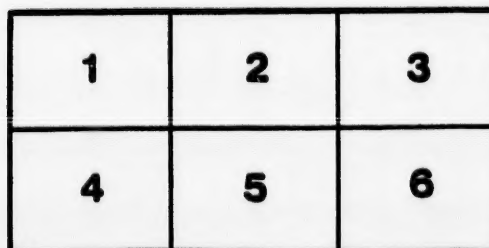
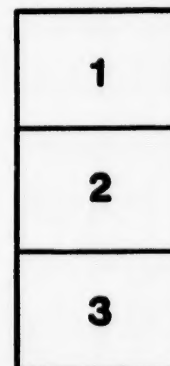
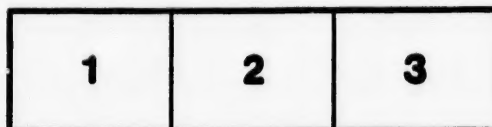
Manuscript Division,
National Archives of Canada

The images appearing here are the best quality possible considering the condition and legibility of the original copy and in keeping with the filming contract specifications.

Original copies in printed paper covers are filmed beginning with the front cover and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression, or the back cover when appropriate. All other original copies are filmed beginning on the first page with a printed or illustrated impression, and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression.

The last recorded frame on each microfiche shall contain the symbol ➡ (meaning "CONTINUED"), or the symbol ▼ (meaning "END"), whichever applies.

Maps, plates, charts, etc., may be filmed at different reduction ratios. Those too large to be entirely included in one exposure are filmed beginning in the upper left hand corner, left to right and top to bottom, as many frames as required. The following diagrams illustrate the method:



L'exemplaire filmé fut reproduit grâce à la générosité de:

Division des manuscrits,
Archives nationales du Canada

Les images suivantes ont été reproduites avec le plus grand soin, compte tenu de la condition et de la netteté de l'exemplaire filmé, et en conformité avec les conditions du contrat de filmage.

Les exemplaires originaux dont la couverture en papier est imprimée sont filmés en commençant par le premier plat et en terminant soit par la dernière page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration, soit par le second plat, selon le cas. Tous les autres exemplaires originaux sont filmés en commençant par la première page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration et en terminant par la dernière page qui comporte une telle empreinte.

Un des symboles suivants apparaîtra sur la dernière image de chaque microfiche, selon le cas: le symbole ➡ signifie "A SUIVRE", le symbole ▼ signifie "FIN".

Les cartes, planches, tableaux, etc., peuvent être filmés à des taux de réduction différents. Lorsque le document est trop grand pour être reproduit en un seul cliché, il est filmé à partir de l'angle supérieur gauche, de gauche à droite, et de haut en bas, en prenant le nombre d'images nécessaire. Les diagrammes suivants illustrent la méthode.

S P E E C H

DELIVERED IN THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,

ON THE 10TH DAY OF MARCH, 1865,

BY

JOHN SCOBLE, ESQ.,

MEMBER FOR ELGIN (WEST RIDING),

ON THE SUBJECT OF THE

CONFEDERATION OF THE BRITISH NORTH AMERICAN PROVINCES.

Quebec:

PRINTED BY HUNTER, ROSE & CO., ST. URSULE STREET.
1865.

045300

Bl

M
feeli
I sh
peri
on t
so lo
wha
of t
the
a fe
catic
app
tion
of a
pref
and
meri
refer
happ
Can
pose
Prov
to t
ques
not
fore
we
the
we s
tics
to t
(He
to th
tract
we l
we n
(Mr
in l
have
He
tive

CONFEDERATION

OF THE

BRITISH NORTH AMERICAN PROVINCES.

Mr. SCOBLE—If I were to consult my own feelings or my convenience, Mr. SPEAKER, I should certainly not rise at this advanced period of the debate, to offer any observations on the great question which has now been so long under discussion; but having somewhat altered the opinions that I entertained of the scheme submitted to the House by the Government, I feel it necessary to make a few remarks in explanation and vindication of the vote I intend to give. In approaching the consideration of the question, I shall divest myself, as far as possible, of all party predilections, of all personal preferences, and of all sectional jealousies, and shall endeavor to discuss it upon its merits, fairly and impartially—first, with reference to the great difficulties which unhappily exist between Upper and Lower Canada; and, secondly, in relation to the proposed union of the British North American Provinces for purposes and objects common to them all. These branches of the main question, or rather these two questions, are not necessarily connected, and may, therefore, be discussed separately; for it is possible we may not be able immediately to secure the union of the provinces, and in that case we shall still have to deal with the difficulties of our own position, and try, if possible, to find a satisfactory solution for them. (Hear, hear.) And first, sir, with reference to the difficulties which have so long distracted and disturbed us, and which hitherto we have in vain attempted to remove. If we may believe the hon. member for Brome (Mr. DUNKIN), whom I regret to see is not in his place, the difficulties to which I have referred are imaginary, not real. He told us, in his elaborate and exhaustive speech, that in Lower Canada the

Catholic and non-Catholic, the English and French-speaking populations, were living in the most entire harmony with each other; and this statement was confirmed by the honorable and learned gentleman the Hon. Atty. Gen. East (Hon. Mr. CARTIER), who declared that so great was that harmony, that he enjoyed the confidence not only of the Catholic, but the Protestant section of the community, and in fact represented them both. Now, sir, I am not disposed to question the fact proclaimed by these honorable gentlemen; on the contrary, I fully believe it, and ascribe the circumstance to their having common objects to pursue, and common interests to maintain. (Hear, hear.) But the hon. member for Brome went further. He affected to believe that no difficulties of any moment existed between Upper and Lower Canada, and that any dissatisfaction that had been manifested by the upper section of the province, might be easily removed without resorting to an organic change in our present Constitution. At least, so I understood the hon. gentleman. On this point I am at issue with him, for I believe those difficulties to be of a most formidable character, and that they threaten at no distant day, unless they be adjusted, the peace and the prosperity of the province—perhaps its disintegration—perhaps its annexation to the United States. Every lover of his country must deprecate such results, and ought to strive to prevent them, or either of them. The House and the country will sustain me in the view I take of the danger of our position, and consequently of the importance of the measure now under consideration, as one means of removing it. (Hear, hear.) If, sir, we can ascertain the true cause of our difficulties, we

shall not have to seek far or long for their remedy. In what do they originate? Some tell us in difference of nationality, of religious creed, of civil institutions, and of language. I am not disposed to ignore these, or to deny that they may be made to play a conspicuous part in the non-settlement of sectional questions; but I utterly deny that they are the cause of our difficulties. Take the question of nationality, for instance. Those among us who are of French extraction may be justly proud of their ancestry, of their traditions, and of their history. They can boast of the mighty empire which those of kindred blood with themselves have founded in Europe, and of the vast influence which it exerts over the civilization and politics of the world; but as they are no longer subject to France, but are within the allegiance of the British Crown, and enjoy all the franchises of British freemen, it appears to me that the question of French nationality disappears, whilst that of origin only remains; and that now the only nationality that can be recognized among us is a British nationality, unless indeed we are prepared to sever our connection with the parent state, commence a new nationality of our own, or merge our political existence in the neighboring republic. But who, sir, among us is prepared for either of these alternatives? Am I to suppose that the people of this province of French origin are less loyal to the British Crown than those of Anglo-Saxon descent? Am I to believe that were the opportunity afforded them, they would reunite themselves with France? These questions, I am assured, they will answer indignantly in the negative. At all events, of this I am satisfied, and I believe they are satisfied, that under no government in the world can they enjoy so large an amount of civil, political and religious liberty as under British sway. The Scotch have their history and their traditions as well as the French, but where is the Scotchman now that is not proud of his alliance with England, or that would wish to dis sever the connection, though thereby he might regain his parliament or his king? I believe that every enlightened French-Canadian is of the same opinion, whatever hot-blooded and hair-brained demagogues may assert to the contrary. (Hear, hear.) Take the question of religious creeds. These are said to present an insurmountable obstacle in the way of the settlement of our sectional difficulty. If, sir, we had established in this province a non-Catholic or Protestant creed, to which

all would be required to subscribe, or if not to subscribe, at least to support by compulsory taxation, then, sir, I could conceive that difference of religious opinion might operate in the way alleged; but as among us the most complete religious liberty is enjoyed—yes, a larger amount of religious liberty than Catholic Christians are allowed in France—I can see no valid ground for the supposition that they would suffer in this respect, or that they ever had the shadow of a reason to fear that in doing an act of justice to Upper Canadians they would be doing injustice to themselves. (Hear, hear.) We are, all of us, too much and too deeply interested in the question of religious liberty, to trespass on the rights of conscience, or to allow of state interference in matters of such transcendent importance as our relations to the Divine Being, and the service and worship we owe to Him. Differing as we do in our creed and modes of worship, religious equality is necessary to the peace and good order of government, as well as to the life of religion itself among the people. We thus become the guardians of the most precious of all liberties, the right to worship God according to the dictates of our conscience, without let or hindrance from each other or the state. (Hear, hear.) But it is said that the civil institutions of Lower Canada would suffer, were Upper Canada allowed a representation in the Legislature and the Government in proportion to its population. I marvel, sir, much that such a difficulty as this should ever have been started. It is well known that the policy of Great Britain has ever been of the most liberal and comprehensive character in relation to matters of this kind. Trace her history in connection with her conquest in any part of the world; and when, except with the consent of the people, has she imposed upon them the body of her statute laws? Her Constitution and her common law of right belong to the peoples subjected to her sway, and these are the guardians of personal and public liberty; but beyond these she allows the largest freedom in respect of customs, the peculiar institutions, and the administration of civil justice throughout the length and breadth of her dominions. However desirable the assimilation of the laws between Upper and Lower Canada may be, uniformity would be purchased at too dear a rate, if it led to dissatisfaction among any considerable class of the people. Time may accomplish what force might destroy. As an Englishman, whilst I believe our laws, in the main, as

w
be
on
th
me
dic
ha
tio
the
all
Ca
ha
hav
An
can
wh
des
ton
pre
but
it
Fre
whe
nati
are
If,
com
busi
and
pelle
sure
to th
will
will
they
phil
most
be n
amon
all ot
ation.
Upp
to pu
and s
instit
super
union
schem
The g
and w
and no
Const
1841
Legisl
on inju
as was
grosses
princip

well as our whole judicial system, are the best in the world, I do not believe either the one or the other to be perfect. To improve them by importing into them whatever is more excellent in other systems, is the dictate of common sense, and will always have my hearty concurrence. The institutions of Lower Canada are perfectly safe in the keeping of Lower Canadians, for practically nothing could be gained by Upper Canadians in changing them, supposing they had the power to do so, which they neither have nor desire to have. (Hear, hear.) And then, sir, with respect to language, I can hardly suppose Lower Canadians serious when they imagine that any desire exists to destroy the use among them of their mother-tongue. It may do well enough to excite a prejudice among ignorant people to say so, but surely among those that are intelligent it can have no effect. It remains with French-Canadians themselves to determine whether they will abandon the use of their native tongue, and adopt ours, or not. They are free to use either, or both, at pleasure. If, sir, in Lower Canada the English are compelled to learn the French language for business purposes and for social intercourse, and in Upper Canada the French are compelled to learn English for similar purposes, surely that need not be a subject for regret to the one or to the other, inasmuch as both will gain by it. And this further advantage will accrue to those skilled in both languages: they will have access to the literature, the philosophy and the science of the two foremost nations of the world. No attempt will be made to ignore the French language among us, so long as those who prefer it to all others shall deem it worthy of preservation. (Hear, hear.) Give the people of Upper and Lower Canada a common object to pursue, and common interests to sustain, and all questions of origin, and creed, and institutions, and language will vanish in the superior end to be attained by their closer union among ourselves, or by their wider union with other colonists under the proposed scheme of Confederation. (Hear, hear.) The great difficulty under which we labor, and which we seek to overcome, is a political and not a social one. It has its root in the Constitution imposed upon the province in 1841 by the Imperial Government and Legislature. That Constitution was founded on injustice to Lower Canada, and its fruit, as was then foreseen, has produced the grossest injustice to Upper Canada. Had the principle of representation based on popula-

tion been then adopted, and the line which separated Upper from Lower Canada been obliterated, except for judicial purposes, we should now be working harmoniously together, instead of seeking organic changes in the Constitution, in order to preserve ourselves from revolution and anarchy. (Hear, hear.) The honorable member for Bagot (Hon. Mr. LAFRANÇOISE), in his speech, quoted largely from the report of Lord DURHAM, to show that that distinguished nobleman was prejudiced against Lower Canadians, and was indisposed to do them justice. By selecting here and there passages from that able document, the gentleman gave a colorable appearance to his accusation, but nothing more. I deem it an act of justice to Lord DURHAM to supplement the extracts read by the honorable member, by further extracts which will show that His Lordship was governed by exact and impartial justice in the measures which he recommended to heal the divisions which then existed in Canada. With the prescient sagacity of a true statesman, he said:—

As the mere amalgamation of the two Houses of Assembly of the two provinces would not be advisable, or give a due share of representation to each, a parliamentary commission should be appointed for the purpose of forming the electoral divisions, and determining the number of members to be returned on the principle of giving representation, as near as may be, in proportion to population.

Where, I ask, is the injustice of this recommendation? Lower Canada had then the larger population, and was entitled to the larger representation in the united Legislature. But the Imperial authorities based the Constitution which they gave to Canada, not on representation according to numbers, but on equality or equal numbers of representatives for the two sections of the province, and the result we have to deplore this day. His Lordship goes on to say:—

I am averse to every plan that has been proposed for giving an equal number of members to the two provinces, in order to attain the temporary end of outnumbering the French, because I think the same object will be attained without violating the principles of representation, and without any such appearance of injustice in the scheme as would set public opinion, both in England and America, strongly against it; and because, when emigration shall have increased the English population in Upper Canada, the adoption of such a principle would operate to defeat the very purpose it is intended to serve. It appears to me that any such electoral management, founded on present provincial divisions, would tend to

defeat the purposes of union, and perpetuate the idea of disunion.

These are words of wisdom, but they were not listened to at home, and the consequences have been lamentable. We find Upper and Lower Canada in a state of antagonism, and collision imminent. We find the Legislature brought to a dead-lock, and our public men driven to their wit's end. All this was foreseen by Lord DUNHAM and provided for in his admirable suggestions for the future government of this important province. And then, in reference to the peculiar institutions of Lower Canada, its religion and its laws, he said:—

I certainly should not like to subject the French-Canadians to the rule of the identical English minority with which they have been so long contending; but from a majority emanating from so much more extended a source, I do not think they would have any oppression or injustice to fear; and in this case the far greater part of the majority never having been brought into collision, would regard them with no animosity that would warp their natural sense of equity. The endowments of the Catholic Church in Lower Canada, and the existence of all its present laws, until altered by the united legislature, might be secured by stipulations similar to those adopted in the union between England and Scotland. I do not think that the subsequent history of British legislation need incline us to believe that the nation which has the majority in a popular legislature is likely to use its power to tamper very hastily with the laws of the people to which it is united.

Such were the opinions and such the basis of that great scheme of union which Lord DUNHAM contemplated, and which he aimed to secure to Upper and Lower Canada. It consisted of two parts: representation based on population in the Legislature; and guarantees that the peculiar institutions of Lower Canada should be protected, and her rights respected. But His Lordship had larger views before him than the union of Upper and Lower Canada. He was anxious that all the British colonies in North America should be consolidated under one government. When His Lordship received his commission from the British Crown, he was strongly in favor of the Federal principle in its application to the then state of Upper and Lower Canada; but a more profound study of the question when in this country, and from consultation with the leading men in the several American Colonies, he arrived at the conclusion that a Legislative would be preferable to a Federal union of those colonies. The change in his opinion is thus stated in the extracts from his report, with which I shall now trouble the House. By a legislative union he means "a complete

incorporation of the provinces included in it under one Legislature exercising universal and sole legislative authority over all of them, exactly in the same manner as the Parliament legislates alone for the whole of the British Isles." After a careful review of the whole subject, Lord DURHAM says:—

I had still more strongly impressed upon me the great advantages of a united government; and I was gratified by finding the leading minds of the various colonies strongly and generally inclined to a scheme that would elevate their countries into something like a national existence. I thought that it would be the tendency of a Federation, sanctioned and consolidated by a monarchical government, gradually to become a complete Legislative union; and that thus, while conciliating the French of Lower Canada, by leaving them the government of their own province, and their own internal legislation, I might provide for the protection of British interests by the General Government, and the gradual transition of the provinces into an united and homogeneous community. But, [His Lordship adds,] the period of gradual transition is past in Lower Canada, [and therefore he says,] that the only efficacious government would be that formed by a Legislative union.

Having thus dealt with the question in its application to Upper and Lower Canada, he extends the range of his observations to the whole of the British possessions in North America, and remarks:—

But while I convince myself that such desirable ends would be secured by a legislative union of the two provinces, I am inclined to go further and enquire whether all these objects would not be more surely obtained by extending this legislative union over all the British possessions in North America; and whether the advantages which I anticipate for two of them might not, and should not in justice be extended over all. Such an union would at once decisively settle the question of races; it would enable the provinces to co-operate for all common purposes; and, above all, it would form a great and powerful people, possessing the means of securing good and responsible government for itself, and which, under the protection of the British Empire, might in some measure counterbalance the preponderant and increasing influence of the United States on the American continent.

His Lordship had no fears that such an union would lead to separation from the Mother Country. He rather looked upon it as a means of strengthening the bonds which united them, and of its proving an advantage to both. On this point he says:—

I do not anticipate that a colonial legislature thus strong and thus self-governing would desire to abandon the connection with Great Britain. On the contrary, I believe that the practical relief from undue interference which would be

the r
prese
the c
and
freed
rate,
our
decre
ruled
ever
it to
separ
count
the A
govern
in tru
power
union
Empir
ing a
woul
denci
His
the r
Legis
provi
conta
North
cation
of the
ture,
terms
Thos
DURE
very
consid
to us
merit
though
might
intesti
future
tion is
with th
Ameri
Canad
of; to
only a
into p
by dis
vations
to be n
House
now, si
submit
tion of
Americ
for pur
not the
orable
convinc

042912
CJESFO

cluded in it
universal
all of them,
Parliament
the British
the whole

d upon me
government;
ding minds
generally
ate their
onal exist-
e tendency
olidated by
to become
thus, while
Canada, by
own pro-
n, I might
terests by
adual tran-
and homo-
ship added,
t in Lower
t the only
formed by

on in its
Canada, he
ns to the
in North

desirable
union of
o further
would not
this legis-
essions in
vantages
ight not,
over all.
settle the
provinces
es; and,
powerful
ng good
ad which,
are, might
ondant
States on

an union
Mother
it as a
which
vantage

gislature
d desire
Britain.
practical
ould be

the result of such a change would strengthen the present bond of feelings and interests, and that the connection would only become more durable and advantageous by having more of equality, of freedom, and of local independence. But, at any rate, our first duty is to secure the well-being of our colonial countrymen; and if in the hidden decrees of that Wisdom by which this world is ruled, it is written that these countries are not for ever to remain portions of the Empire, we owe it to our honor to take good care that when they separate from us they should not be the only countries on the American continent in which the Anglo-Saxon race shall be found unfit to govern themselves. I am, [says His Lordship,] in truth, so far from believing that the increased power and weight given to these colonies by union would endanger their connection with the Empire, that I look to it as the means of fostering such a national feeling throughout them as would effectually counterbalance whatever tendencies may now exist towards separation.

His Lordship then strongly recommends the union of the two Canadas under one Legislature, and of reconstituting them as one province; and "the bill," he says, "should contain provisions by which any or all of the North American colonies may, on the application of the Legislature, be, with the consent of the two Canadas, or their united Legislature, admitted into the union on such terms as may be agreed on between them." These remarkable passages drawn from Lord DUBHAM's report, appear to me to embody the very spirit of the scheme submitted to our consideration by the Government, and coming to us recommended by so high an authority, merit our best attention; and if realized, though not in the precise form many of us might desire, we may hope it will heal our intestine divisions, and open to us a glorious future. Representation based on population is denied to Upper Canada, unless coupled with the Confederation of all the British North American colonies; the separation of Upper Canada, pure and simple, is not to be thought of; to return to the position we occupied only a year ago, would be to plunge once more into political contests, with feelings embittered by disappointment; and therefore, with reservations affecting details only, I shall feel it to be my duty to give the motion before the House my best support. (Hear, hear.) And now, sir, I propose to consider the scheme submitted to us in relation to the larger question of the union of all the British North American Provinces under one government, for purposes common to them all. I needed not the arguments or the eloquence of honorable gentlemen on the Treasury benches to convince me of the immense importance of

such a junction as shall lead to the development of a new nationality, and secure to generations yet unborn the advantages of unity and power. With the permission of the House, I will read an extract from a letter which I addressed to the Duke of NEWCASTLE in 1859, when that nobleman visited this country in the suite of His Royal Highness the PRINCE OF WALES, bearing directly on this point. Having briefly stated the grounds which induced me to write to His Grace, I said:—

The possessions of Great Britain in North America are not only vast in extent and marvellous in resources, but for facility of internal communication by lakes and rivers, are unrivalled; and their geographical position is such as to make them of the very last importance to the political and commercial greatness of the British Empire. Possessing the control of this magnificent part of the American continent, with comparatively easy access through it from the Atlantic to the Pacific shores, Great Britain need not fear the rivalry nor dread the preponderance of the United States. But in order that she may derive from it all the advantages it is so well calculated to afford, she must have a fixed and determinate policy, wisely conceived, practical in its details, and perseveringly carried out. In the planting of future colonies in British North America, care should be taken to make them as few as possible. I regret, therefore, that it appears to have been determined to give the Red River settlement a distinct political existence. Canada should have been allowed to expand westwards to the Rocky Mountains, instead of being cooped up within her present limits. She would then have been able to absorb more easily the outlying colonies of Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island on the Atlantic, and British Columbia and Vancouver's Island on the Pacific. Consolidated ultimately under one government, after the model of the Mother Country, with such modifications as the circumstances of the case might require, an empire might be formed over which, hereafter, some one branch of the Royal Family might reign a constitutional monarch, over a free and united people. In the meantime there is nothing to hinder the appointment of a Prince of the blood royal to be Viceroy over all the possessions of Great Britain in North America, and under him, lieutenant-governors to administer the affairs of the separate dependencies, until they could be gradually and permanently united. Your Grace will perceive from this statement that I object to the American system of federation, and would oppose to it the unification of the British colonies in this part of the world. One government, one legislature, one judiciary, instead of many, with their conflicting institutions, interests, and jurisdictions, is what I would respectfully venture to recommend as the true policy of the Mother Country on this side of

the Atlantic, as it has been with the most splendid results on the other. A Federal Government, such as that of the United States, for instance, is and must be weak in itself, from the discordant elements of which it is composed, and will be found to contain within itself the seeds of disorganization and dissolution. The multiplication of colonies in a new country like this is tantamount to the multiplication of petty sovereignties, and the creation of rivalries and antagonisms which, sooner or later, will manifest themselves, and prevent the development of that greatness, power and prosperity which an opposite policy, wisely administered, would, in my judgment, effectually promote and secure. By unification, however, I do not mean centralization. I am no friend to the bureaucratic system of France, Austria, and Prussia. A government, to be strong and respected, must leave to the people the largest amount of liberty consistent with the safety and advantage of the whole, in the management of their local affairs. Such a municipal system as we have in Canada is all that is necessary to secure that end. With the political franchise extended to all classes of the community, whether native-born or naturalized, the national life could not fail to develop itself in forms that would give permanence to its institutions, contentment to its people, and strength to its government.

The opinions which I entertained in 1859 I entertain now. Now, as then, I am in favor of the unification of the British American Provinces. Now, as then, I am opposed to the Federal principle, as exemplified in the formation and practical working of the Government of the United States. The greatest statesmen, the wisest men, who became conspicuous during the American revolution, were clearly of opinion that a government to be strong must be a unit, and must possess within itself, and in all its organs, supreme power and a commanding influence. To diffuse those powers, or even to share them with state or local governments, they felt would weaken it in its most vital parts. They would, therefore, have stripped the States of every attribute of sovereignty, and confined their action to matters of a purely local or municipal character; but they had not the power, and the consequences are visible in the fratricidal war now raging among them, devastating their fairest provinces and filling the land with mourning and woe. The lessons of history and the experience of other peoples should not be lost upon us; and for myself, I hesitate not to say that if, in the proposed Federation of the British American colonies, we were to follow the example of the framers of the Government of the United States, or to copy its Constitution, it would have my most determined opposition. The scheme before

us, however, is formed after a different model, and in its essential features is in perfect contrast to that on which the Constitution of the United States is based. It is true it creates local governments with large legislative and executive powers; it is true it gives those governments concurrent powers with the General Government; it is true it gives them possession of the public lands within their several jurisdictions; it is true it allows two of those governments to levy export duties on lumber, coal and other minerals,—and looked at in the light of an advanced political science, this is to be lamented; but looked at in the light of possible and practicable statesmanship, it was unavoidable. I am, therefore, prepared to accept it as a whole, as in fact the best that could have been produced under the circumstances in which it was framed. (Hear, hear.) A careful analysis of the scheme convinces me that the powers conferred on the General or Central Government secures it all the attributes of sovereignty, and the *veto* power which its executive will possess, and to which all local legislation will be subject, will prevent a conflict of laws and jurisdictions in all matters of importance, so that I believe in its working it will be found, if not in form yet in fact and practically, a legislative union. (Hear, hear.) Taking this general and, as I believe, correct view of the case, I shall abstain from all criticism of its minor details, in the hope that what is found hereafter immature or unworkable will be abandoned by general consent. The Imperial Government will take care, no doubt, that that part of the scheme which conflicts with the prerogatives of the Crown will be removed, or, at all events, be brought into harmony with them. On one or two points brought out very fully by the Catholic members of the House in opposition to the scheme, I shall venture to offer a few remarks. They take exception to the power conferred on the General Government in the matter of marriage and divorce. I think, sir, the power is very properly placed there. I respect their religious convictions; as a Protestant, I ask them to respect mine. We owe each other mutual toleration. If the Protestant section of this House and this province do not regard marriage as a sacrament, and, therefore, inviolable and indissoluble, I believe they will be found to have as high an opinion of the sacred obligations involved in it, and admit it to be as binding upon the conscience of all who enter upon that holy and honorable state, as their Catholic fellow-subjects. But *quod* the state or the civil government of the country, Protestants at

large, regard marriage as a civil contract only, and consequently dissoluble on cause shown. This view ought not to be offensive to the judgment or the conscience of our Catholic friends, for it will not and cannot interfere in the slightest degree, either with the form or the continuity of their marriages; and surely they will grant to us, the non-Catholic section of the province, that liberty of conscience in this matter which they claim and enjoy themselves. (Hear, hear.) Another point touched upon by my honorable friend the member for Peterborough (Col. HAULTAIN) demands from me a passing remark. I believe that my honorable friend correctly interpreted the feelings of Protestants in Lower Canada, when he referred to the probable effect of the Pope's encyclical on the Catholic mind of the country. They think that if the principles inculcated in that letter were acted upon, their religious liberties and privileges would be in peril. But it would appear that my honorable friend had not the true key to the interpretation of that famous document. Catholic commentators find it to be perfectly innocuous when properly understood. Be that as it may, I rely rather on the good sense and good feeling of Catholics themselves, and above all, on the religious liberty secured to us in this province, than on the Pope's encyclical, for the protection of our liberties, whether civil or religious. Let us be united in object and in interest as a people, and I have no fear, however diversified our opinions may be on matters personal to ourselves, but that we shall grow up to be a great nation, and that a glorious future awaits us. (Hear, hear.) As there are yet several honorable gentlemen to address the House, I shall not trespass on its attention much longer, as I am anxious the debate should be brought to a close as soon as possible, in order that the Government may be able, by its representatives in England, to perform those important duties which are so urgent and so necessary at the present moment. (Hear, hear.) Before sitting down, however, I wish to make one or two remarks on the conflicting opinions entertained by honorable gentlemen on the permanency of our relations to the Mother Country. I do not believe there is any large party there who desire to separate themselves from us. On the contrary, I believe the great bulk of the British people are proud of the connection, and are prepared to maintain it if we do our part in cultivating that connection by meeting their just and reasonable demands. There can be no doubt that one cause of dissatisfaction ex-

pressed in England towards us has resulted from our fiscal policy. I shall venture no opinion on that policy just now, whether it was wise or otherwise, but it strikes me very forcibly that we have it now in our power to set ourselves right on that point, and to it I would respectfully invite the attention of the Government. The question of our defences is very earnestly pressed on our attention by the authorities at home; but that is undoubtedly an Imperial as well as a provincial question, and might be dealt with in this way. If the British Government and people really desire to maintain their connection with the Canadas, they are under the obligation, both moral and political, to afford them adequate defence in money, material and men, in case of necessity; for it is clear that without these our position, except at one or two points, is clearly indefensible. On the other hand, if we are anxious to continue our relations with the Mother Country, then we are bound by the highest considerations of policy to adjust our tariff on imports in such a manner as to give no real cause of complaint to the people at home. I am persuaded that if we do this it will smooth the way for the removal of any hostility that may have been shown towards us by any class of politicians in England. Privileges and duties are reciprocal, and should be met in a cordial spirit; and let it be remembered that material interests are, of all others, the most binding upon nations in amity with each other, and are the best calculated to maintain our relations undisturbed with the parent state. (Hear, hear.) With me, sir, it is a matter of extreme importance that our relations with the Mother Country should be settled on a firm and permanent basis. (Hear, hear.) I therefore quite agree with the hon. gentleman (Mr. SHANLY) who has just sat down, on the necessity of pressing this point on the attention of the Imperial Government. Mr. SPEAKER, my most earnest desire and prayer is that by a well-considered scheme of union—a union that shall embrace the whole of the British possessions in North America, from the Atlantic to the Pacific oceans, under one government—results may follow of the most beneficial character, both to the colonies and the Mother Country; and that Providence may so guide the counsels and influence the acts of those who now direct our affairs, as to secure to the people of this country, and to succeeding generations, the blessings of a well-ordered government and a wise administration of public affairs. (Cheers.)